

energy and attitude toward teaching and helping others has always translated into family. Now that her sons are grown, she continues that same philosophy with her three grandsons. She is constantly researching and providing pathways to higher learning for each of her grandsons. She does this by taking each one of their strengths individually and providing a specific learning goal for each one, which is very similar to the approach she uses to provide Military Academy Appointments each year. Patty loves sharing the accomplishments of her sons & grandsons to her many friends and extended family members. She stays in close contact with her sister, niece, and nephew who all live in Oregon and Washington.

So I ask all of my colleagues to join me in thanking Patty Shay for her service to Congress, and the Nation. I wish her all the best in her retirement.

TRIBUTE TO BERNARD M.  
LUKETICH

HON. MICHAEL F. DOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
*Thursday, July 25, 2013*

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the long service of Mr. Bernard M. Luketich as National President of the Croatian Fraternal Union, which is headquartered in Pittsburgh.

Since its founding in 1894, the Croatian Fraternal Union has grown with the Croatian community in the United States. It is estimated that 30,000 Croatian Americans currently live in the Greater Pittsburgh area, and I am very happy to represent many of our local Croatian Americans in the U.S. Congress.

The Croatian Fraternal Union has provided much-needed insurance, investment, and social services for its members since its inception and has helped many Croatian Americans establish successful families and communities over the past 100+ years.

The Croatian Fraternal Union also ardently supported the Republic of Croatia's establishment as a stable democratic and free market-oriented nation-state as a result of the devolution of the Soviet Union and the Balkan Wars in the 1990s. The CFU was instrumental in developing American support as a founding member of and in steady concert with the National Federation of Croatian Americans for the new Republic's full accession into western multilateral organizations. This includes full membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO, in early 2009 and the European Union on July 1, 2013.

This year, Mr. Luketich was re-elected to serve his 35th year as President of the CFU, the largest and oldest Croatian American organization in the United States. I would like to congratulate Bernie for his 35 years of strong leadership as President of the Croatian Fraternal Union.

As we all know, the president of any organization cannot do it alone. It is important to also to note the contributions of his long-time senior staff at the Pittsburgh headquarters—Executive Assistant/Editor Lorraine Turkall, Secretary/Treasurer Ed Pazo, VP Franjo Bertovic, VP George Pavlecic, Editor Ivan Begg, and CFU Board of Trustees President Bernadette Luketich Sikaras.

Mr. Speaker, I submit a June 5th article on Bernie Luketich's career that appeared in the Croatian American community's premier ethnic newspaper, the "Zajednicar."

Mr. Speaker, congratulations again to Bernie for his steady leadership and service to his diaspora community and to our United States.

[From the Zajednicar, June 5, 2013]

BERNARD M. LUKETICH—CELEBRATING 35 YEARS AS NATIONAL PRESIDENT OF THE CROATIAN FRATERNAL UNION OF AMERICA

A record-setting milestone was achieved on June 1, 2013 as CFU National President Bernard M. Luketich began his 35th anniversary year serving as National President at the helm of the Croatian Fraternal Union of America. Consecutively elected as National President since the 1979 CFU National Convention, President Luketich is currently serving his ninth full term as president of the Society.

Prior to becoming National President on June 1, 1978, Luketich had served as a Member of the Society's National Administration in various capacities, beginning with his election to the National Board of Trustees at the 1959 CFU National Convention held at Detroit, Michigan.

The son of Emma and Ivan Luketic, Bernard Luketich was born and raised in Cokeburg, Pennsylvania. His father, Ivan, emigrated from the village of Zagorje, Ogulin, Croatia and settled in Cokeburg where he found work in the Pennsylvania coal mines. A coal miner himself in his youth, Bernard Luketich carried his family values and love for his Croatian ancestry to become a leader of the largest Croatian fraternal organization outside of the old homeland.

Recognized as the "Founding Father" of the CFU Junior Cultural Federation, President Luketich counts this youth cultural program among his proudest achievements since it perpetuates Croatian identity and heritage among CFU children and young adults. In addition to the annual Junior Tamburitza Festivals, President Luketich was further instrumental in initiating the annual CFU Adult Tamburitza Festivals, both cultural events which have flourished over the years to promote Croatian tamburitza music throughout the United States and Canada.

Interested in Croatian activities at a young age, Bernard Luketich became a member of the Croatian Fraternal Union in 1932. He was elected President of his local CFU Lodge 354 at Cokeburg, Pennsylvania at the age of 16 and has served in that capacity since that time. Luketich established the St. George Junior Tamburitza of Lodge 354 in 1950 and later organized the St. George Adult Tamburitza of Lodge 354 in which he currently participates as an active tamburitza.

President Luketich has been the recipient of numerous prestigious awards, including the Redom Hrvatskog Pletera in 1996, the Redom Danice Hrvatske s Likom Katarine Zrinske in 1998, both bestowed upon him by the late Croatian President Dr. Franjo Tudjman, and the Red Kneza Trpimira s Ogrlicom i Danicom in 2003, presented to him by former Croatian President Stjepan Mesic.

Without question, Bernard Luketich has been the driving force in promoting Fraternal Unity among the CFU Membership and is the identifiable face of the Croatian Fraternal Union who has been instrumental in making our Fraternal Organization what it is today.

Bernard Luketich, along with his wife, Martha, and their family, continue to make their home in the small mining town of Cokeburg, PA. The full legacy of National President Luketich is yet to be written but

we can continue to expect great things from Bernard M. Luketich as he greets his 35th Presidential Year with the same pride that he has espoused since first becoming a member of our Fraternal Society. His lifelong passion remains the principles, programs and benefits of the CFU and the preservation of Croatian heritage, culture and identity. "Zivio!", President Luketich!

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## OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

### HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 25, 2013

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$16,738,116,336,111.15. We've added \$6,111,239,287,178.07 to our debt in 4 and a half years. This is \$6 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

## IN RECOGNITION OF THE JAMIE KOTULA FOUNDATION FOR OUT- STANDING COMMUNITY CON- TRIBUTIONS

### HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 25, 2013

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Jamie Kotula Foundation, an organization set forth to enrich the lives of others in Northeastern Pennsylvania through "random acts of kindness," a strong value of Jamie Kotula. The Foundation will also host the third annual Kick-Off Classic on August 31 and September 1, 2013, marking the outset of the fall sports season at Marywood University in Scranton.

Jamie Kotula, who tragically passed in a car accident on the morning of January 14, 2011

at the age of sixteen, lived a life of service towards others. His selfless character was revealed as a student at Holy Cross High School in Dunmore, Pennsylvania, where he served as secretary of the Student Council and a member of the boys' varsity soccer, swim, and track teams. In addition to being a dedicated class leader and a skilled and energetic athlete, Jamie was extremely well-rounded as a member of the National Honor Society, the Pro-Life club, chess club, foreign language club, and the show choir.

In honor of Jamie Kotula, who lived his life in the present each and every day, the Jamie Kotula Foundation was created to support like-minded individuals and groups in Northeast Pennsylvania who enrich lives and communities through acts of kindness and selflessness. Since its creation in 2011, the Foundation has distributed more than \$100,000 in both scholarships and donations to charitable causes, such as helping out the victims of the school violence at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, Connecticut.

In recognition of the community contributions of the Jamie Kotula Foundation's largest event, the Kick-Off Classic, I add my congratulations and best wishes for continued success and service.

## INTRODUCTION OF THE PERMA- NENTLY ENDING RECEIPT BY PRISONERS ACT

### HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 25, 2013

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Permanently Ending Receipt by Prisoners Act, also known as the PERP Act. I am pleased to be joined by Representatives TODD YOUNG, MIKE KELLY, TIM GRIFFIN, JIM RENACCI, TOM REED, and CHARLES BOUSTANY, all Members of the Committee on Ways and Means Human Resources Subcommittee, which I chair. As a former sheriff and now Chairman of this Subcommittee that has jurisdiction over the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program, this bill blends the expertise I developed in my past career with my present committee responsibilities.

Under existing UI program rules that operate in all States, an individual must be able, available, and actively seeking work in order to be eligible to collect UI benefits, which are paid to those who are unemployed through no fault of their own. Individuals confined in jails, prisons, and other penal institutions are by definition not "able and available" to work and have historically been presumed to be not eligible for UI benefits.

Despite this fact, news articles in multiple States have revealed a nationwide epidemic of unemployment benefit payments to incarcerated individuals. Recent headlines include: Illinois: "State: More than \$2M in Unemployment Benefits Went to Inmates" (10/9/12); New Jersey: "Audit Says 20,000 Inmates Were Mistakenly Paid Nearly \$24M in State and Federal Benefits" (5/29/13); Pennsylvania: "Inmates Collect Millions in Unemployment Benefits in Philadelphia Jails" (2/20/13); and South Carolina: "Government Waste—Inmates Collecting Millions in Fraudulent Unemployment Checks" (2/21/13). The list unfortunately does not end

there, and these and other articles make it clear that taxpayers are wasting millions of dollars each year on unemployment benefit payments to prisoners.

We must make it very clear that incarcerated individuals should not be receiving unemployment benefits, and that States need to make affirmative efforts to end this obvious abuse. Unemployment benefits are designed to support people who are able and trying to find work and provide for their families, but who have fallen on hard times. It is an injustice that the tax dollars of law-abiding citizens are being used to provide assistance to people who have broken the law and simply should not qualify for these benefits.

The PERP Act provides the solutions to this problem by taking the following steps:

Barring States from paying UI checks to local, state and federal prisoners, strengthening a current implied prohibition because prisoners are not "able and available" for work; and

Requiring State UI agencies to regularly compare UI rolls with currently available inmate rosters to ensure UI checks are not paid to current inmates. At a minimum, States must access and use prisoner information the Social Security Administration has collected and used since the late-1990s to prevent the payment of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefit checks to currently incarcerated individuals. This current data match is simple, quick, and efficient, and can readily be replicated by States to ensure that UI benefit checks are not paid to prisoners.

During 2011, the UI program made a staggering \$10.3 billion in improper payments, some of which were to individuals in our nation's jails and prisons. Those payments were made because under current practice too many States rely on the inmate to report their change of residence to the jail so that their UI benefits would end. Not surprisingly, few inmates volunteer to stop collecting these checks, and no benefit program should rely on the honesty of inmates to ensure taxpayer funds are properly spent. This legislation ends the practice of relying on self-reported information by inmates to prevent this type of UI benefit misspending. It does so simply by expecting all State UI agencies to tap into an existing Federal database of prisoners, already used to ensure that inmates do not collect disability checks. This system is fast, efficient, and affordable.

Again, I want to thank my colleagues on the Human Resources Subcommittee, Representatives TODD YOUNG, MIKE KELLY, TIM GRIFFIN, JIM RENACCI, TOM REED, and CHARLES BOUSTANY, for their support as original cosponsors of this bill. I invite all Members to join me in supporting this important legislation and look forward to its speedy consideration so that we can ensure we put an end to the outrageous practice of prisoners collecting benefit payments intended for the truly unemployed.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 25, 2013

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, last week, July 18, 2013, I was speaking with a documentary group about the civil rights movement, and I was unable to make it to the floor